

totally with her sensual nature and fecundity; her train of thought, while she is lying in the darkness at night, is carried on by her own memories, one triggering another by a kind of association which is simply literal. Mr Bloom, uniting the extremes, is everybody, the whole of mankind; in his stream of consciousness things are linked by cause and effect or by being near in space / time. The theme of the novel, implied by the quest or journey, is moral: human life means suffering, falling but also struggling to rise and seek the good.

The mythical method

Joyce's *Ulysses* was a new form of prose based on 'the mythical method', resulting from the progress made by psychology, ethnology and anthropology, rather than on the 'narrative method'. This allowed the author to make a parallel with the *Odyssey* and provides the book with a symbolic, cross-temporal meaning; Homer's myth was used to enlarge by resemblance and difference the actions and people of a Dublin day, to give them another dimension and to express the universal in the particular. Joyce, however, called his work a 'novel', declaring he wanted to write a 'modern epic in prose'. In fact in *Ulysses* he achieved a new form of realism.

A revolutionary prose

Ulysses is famous for many things, from its complex structure to its difficulty, from its brilliantly realised characters to its 'obscenities'; but what really marks it is its revolutionary prose. In fact, Joyce combined several methods to present a variety of matters. The stream of consciousness technique; the cinematic technique with the literary equivalents of close-ups, flashbacks, tracking shots, suspension of speech; question and answer; dramatic dialogue; and the juxtaposition of events, with the consequent construction of order and unity from their randomness, enabled the writer to render his characters' inner life creating the so-called 'collage technique', quite similar to the technique used by the Cubist artists who depicted a scene from all perspectives. In *Ulysses* Joyce brought to perfection the interior monologue employing both the two levels of narration, one external to the character's mind and the other internal, and only the mind level of narration, with the character's thoughts flowing freely without any interruption coming from the external world. The language used is rich in puns, images, contrasts, paradoxes, juxtapositions, interruptions, false clues and symbols; the range of vocabulary and registers is amazing, moreover, in almost every episode slang, catchphrases, nicknames, even expressions taken from advertising are present and used to voice the unspoken activity of the mind. Foreign words, literary quotations and allusions to other texts are other important linguistic features.